

Empowering Youth to Reinforce Multilateralism: Engaging Youth Leadership in Building a World of Peace

Concept note

Conference: Future We Want MUN: Global Initiative for Young Leaders, organized by the Italian Diplomatic Academy (IDA), a United Nations Department of Global Communications (DGC) Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) associated NGO. The event is under the theme: “**Empowering Youth to Reinforce Multilateralism: Engaging Youth Leadership in Building a World of Peace**”.

Rationale: “Multilateralism is a necessity rather than an idealistic ambition. In our global age, crises seldom remain contained within a single country. They cross borders frequently, whether through forced displacement, the spread of conflict, crime, pandemics, and terrorism, or the rippling outward of economic consequences. As a result, the fundamental challenges of the twenty-first century are beyond the capacity of any single state or region to respond alone. By necessity, the interconnected and diverse challenges of the twenty-first century require global solutions through effective, robust, and revitalized multilateralism.” (ICM 2016).

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by United Nations (UN) Member States in September 2015. Youths are at the centre of sustainable development and with 1/2 of the world population represented by youth, it is crucial to engage them in the process; at all levels. The 2030 agenda cannot be successfully achieved, if we fail to address the cultural nuances that invariably exist and bring youths to the decision-making table. An effective and fully engaged youth will certainly play a key-role in reaffirming Multilateralism as the ideal path to-walk-through to build the Future We Want in a more Sustainable World. “Strengthening the multilateral system is not only about states. It must also address ‘we the peoples’. A more ‘people-centred’ approach that actively engages local populations and civil society, with particular focus on youth, would enhance the system’s legitimacy. It could also help inspire and support collective citizen-oriented action to confront complex, interconnected, and fast-evolving transnational problems.” (ICM 2016).

Purpose: Within the above-mentioned framework, the Future We Want MUN launches its sixth conference to be held in New York July 30th – August 1st, 2026. In an epochal moment where stronger states are tempted to act unilaterally, our action is urgently focused to build up in the youth a more consensus-oriented attitude and reminding how States and people have both a self-interest and a common interest in making the UN more effective. Youth can and must play a crucial role overall if there is the full awareness that their future, their world is at stake. Reaffirming the importance for Member States to operate within multilateral structures and rules can help protect the international community against the disorder caused by States going it alone. We strongly believe that a more concerted framework of action will likely facilitate the attainment of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. The Future We Want MUN is strongly committed in establishing the needed platforms for youth to further deepening their knowledge and building their capacity becoming leaders and focal points within their countries in the enforcement of Multilateralism.

Planning and Format: The planning process will be organized by an international secretariat (FWWMUN), set up under the IDA umbrella. The opening ceremony will focus on the role of youth in reinforcing multilateralism. The format will include several keynote speakers on the topic from multiple UN agencies and Permanent Missions.

Participation: Participation of more than 500 youth from over 40 countries will be ensured so to guarantee a wider consultation among selected young leaders representing their countries and communities.

Conclusion: The Future We Want MUN builds on the commitment made by Member States in 2012. However, FWWMUN has taken a new paradigm shift by focusing solely on youth engagement, all over the world. We anticipate that the conference in July 2026 will serve as the pinnacle for future conferences that will serve as the international community ‘go to’ tool in engaging young persons and young professionals in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the world over. It will prove as a unique opportunity to fully engage civil society on the importance of MUN and engaging youths at all levels towards achieving the 2030 agenda. In consideration of the proposed theme, the conference organizing committee is strongly committed in providing the needed platform for youth to discuss and consult to further deepening their knowledge and building their capacity becoming leaders and focal points within their countries in the enforcement of Multilateralism.